

# The Impact of Connections



2017 ANNUAL REPORT



People Inc

Where your world opens up.



# Message from the President

People have always been at the heart of our organization. From the incredible individuals we support, to our hardworking employees, to all of those who make our work possible — strong personal connections have allowed **People Inc.** to grow and thrive. In 2017, so many people joined together to strengthen our services, advocate for one another and work toward our mission of ensuring that people with developmental disabilities or other special needs have the support they need to participate and succeed in an accepting society.

One example that comes to mind is 21-year-old Danny, who is pictured on the cover of this report. Many people took part in a collaborative effort to ensure Danny's success, with countless employees working alongside Danny's parents, Connie and Matt. "Thanks to a lot of creative thinking and flexibility from staff, Danny's doing great today," shared Connie.

### **The impact of connections can be found in so many other ways, too.**

In 2017, we opened a new residential site for people with developmental disabilities to live and enjoy a safe and comfortable home-like setting. In the summer, we opened **Highland School Apartments in Tonawanda**, which involved working with the town and a variety of funding sources over two years. It is now home to a diverse group of people with and without disabilities. Manny, a tenant from Highland whose story is featured in this report, is a testament to the great things that happen when people work together.

We also opened an **after-school program** in the Ken-Ton School District and expanded our children's services in the greater Rochester region by offering a new behavioral services program to help individuals and their parents. Both of these are after-school respite programs that provide care for children and young adults with developmental disabilities. While the children take part in skill-building arts, crafts and activities, parents, guardians and caregivers can use the time to work full days or complete errands.

This past year we expanded our reach into the community when **Carpet Cleaning Done Right**, a People Inc. enterprise, was awarded a contract from the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority to provide carpet cleaning services for areas of the Buffalo Niagara International Airport. Our Vocational Program continues to be a shining example of how individuals like Susan, also highlighted in this report, have found meaningful connections within the community. We have continued working with community businesses toward fuller employment for people with disabilities.

Of course, all of these accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedication of many — including wonderful **supporters** like you, who are committed to making a difference across Western New York and the greater Rochester region. Thank you.

**Rhonda Frederick**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

## Charitable Legacy Society

Our Charitable Legacy Society honors those who have taken the step of including the **People Inc. Foundation** in their long-term plans through a bequest provision, life-income or other deferred giving arrangement. We thank and recognize individuals who, through consideration of their estate plans, make a lasting and remarkable legacy gift that further secures the future and mission of People Inc. For more information, contact the People Inc. Foundation at 716.817.7470.

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## Meeting Goals with a Team of Support

**E**mmanuel Jones, best known as Manny, is staying focused thanks to a team of support.

Manny, 51, receives assistance through People Inc.'s Self-Directed Services, a person-centered program that helps individuals with developmental disabilities manage plans tailored to their interests. Participants develop life skills and receive vocational experiences.

With help from staff, Manny budgeted for two trips through People and Places, a non-profit vacation organization for people with special needs. Twice last year, he traveled to Ohio to visit the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Although these road trips may seem like small feats, they took much planning and were great ways for Manny to build important skills. With guidance from staff, he learned how to manage his money and pack essentials, like outfits and medications.

In addition to these trips, one of Manny's biggest accomplishments was moving from living with two roommates to living on his own. He was one of the first tenants at our new integrated housing project, People Inc. **Highland School Apartments**, bringing together people with disabilities and the general public.

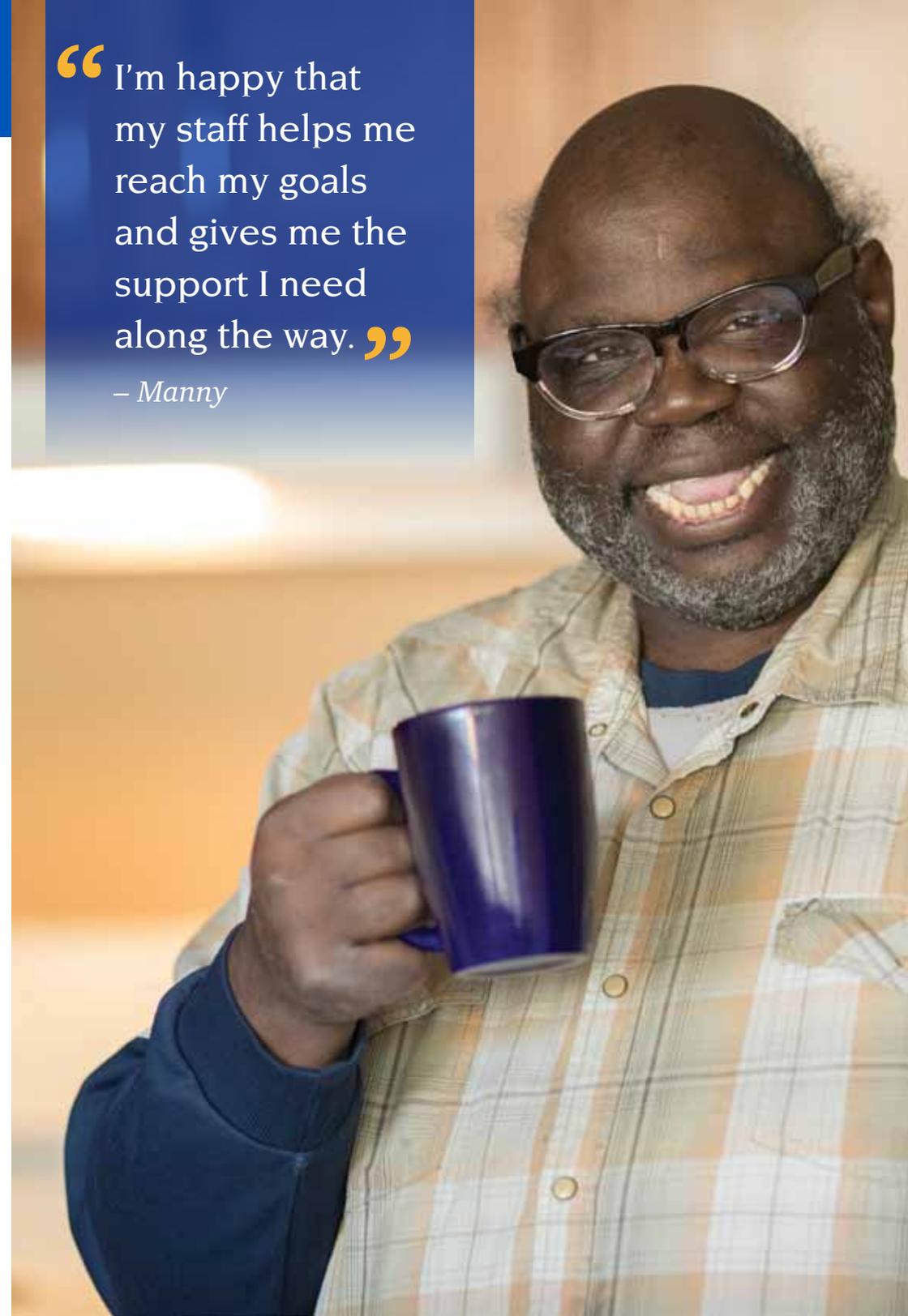
Staff was instrumental with helping Manny condense his belongings and settle in at his new home. "The Self-Directed Services Program works really well for Manny because he is so independent already," shared Misha Johnson-Ellis, senior community supervisor. "Combine that independence with assistance where he needs it and Manny is really able to flourish."

So what's next for Manny? He is pursuing his dream of being a DJ by replacing and selling his existing music equipment to make it a viable business. With support from Life Coach Gary Spears, Manny set a goal to have six DJ gigs in 2018, an increase of two from the previous year. "Our team is here to support Manny's immediate and long-term needs, while engaging him for self-improvement," explained Gary.

Plus, Manny is so appreciative of the team's assistance. "I'm happy that my staff helps me reach my goals and gives me the support I need along the way," he said.

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– Manny



## The Path to Meaningful Employment

Susan Winter, 59, loves working in the dining room at Wendy's on Transit Road in Depew. There are so many great parts of her job, she says, that she can't pick just one favorite.

As a crew member, Susan helps to wipe down the tables, refill condiments, take back trays, assist with the door or soda machine and clean the bathroom. With her bubbly personality and a ready smile, she easily wins over customers. "They just rave about her," shares Susan's manager, Ashley Michalak.

Before Susan came to Wendy's, she worked at the Erie County Home for nearly 33 years. When the facility relocated to downtown Buffalo in early 2013, Susan was unable to make the commute from her Alden home. The transition to job hunting was not easy, but thanks to the great connection she had with a **People Inc. employment specialist**, Susan was able to overcome her anxieties and complete job applications, as well as interview and advocate for herself. The process led her to Wendy's, where years later she couldn't be happier.

"I love the customers and my co-workers," said Susan. The feeling, Ashley adds, goes both ways. "Susan is always happy and does a good job all around. The customers really appreciate her."

This great experience of hiring an individual with disabilities is nothing new to Wendy's. The company shares that it was founded on quality and respect - values that continue to shape everything they do today. Since she has been with Wendy's, Ashley can attest to their inclusiveness and knows the rewards it can bring.

"Just dedicate the time and communicate what you want," said Ashley of hiring people with disabilities. "In the end it works out well!"

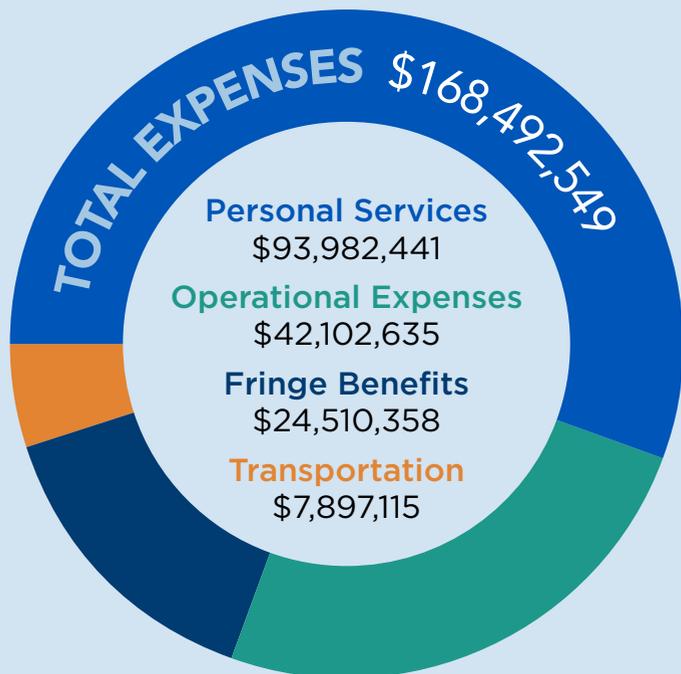
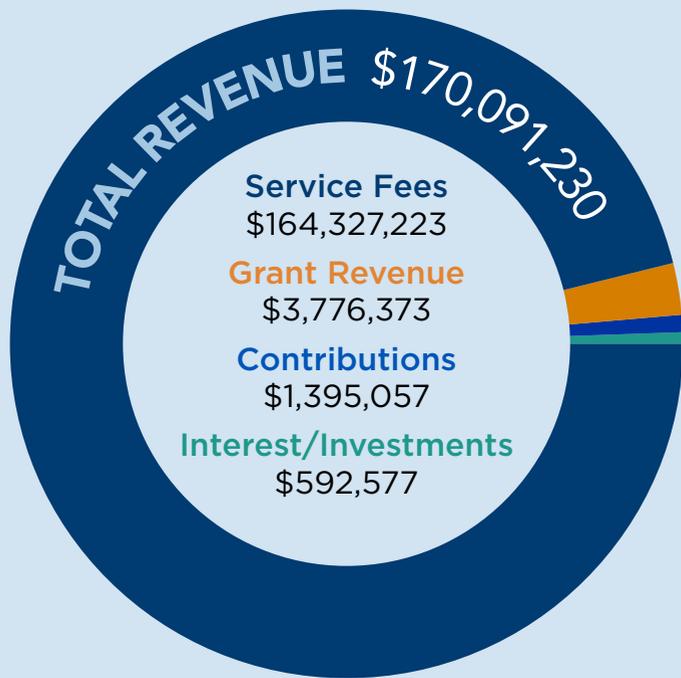
### Our Mission

People Inc. exists so that individuals with disabling conditions or other special needs have the supports they need to participate and succeed in an accepting society.



“I love the customers and my co-workers.”

– Susan



Where your world opens up.

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